

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2015
Buena Vista, New Castle

Call to Order: Senator Blevins, Chair, called the DVCC Quarterly meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

Introductions: In attendance were the following DVCC members: Senator Patricia Blevins, Commissioner Robert Coupe, Diane Glenn, Secretary Jennifer Ranji, and Secretary Lewis Schiliro, Dawn Culp, and Chief Judge Newell. Also in attendance were Judge Rocanelli for President Judge Jurden (Superior Court), Leann Moore for Representative Stephanie Bolden (House of Representatives), Kerry Ferriter for Chief Defender Brendan O'Neill (ODS), Adrienne Owen (DSP), Cherelyn Homlish (People's Place), Maureen Monagle (CJC), Shamla McLaurin (Catholic Charities), Melissa Kearney (P&P), Joe Miller (WPD), Dr. Vicky Kelly (DFS), Renee Buskirk (P&P), , Melanie Ewing-Lahutsky (Superior Court), Deiana Jason (CHILD, Inc.), Tim Collins (member of the public), and DVCC Staff Ellie Torres, Natasha Smith, Aimee String, Pat Kwetkauskie and Karen Ewing.

Minutes: A motion to approve the May 11, 2015 minutes was made, seconded and the minutes were approved.

Presentation: The DVCC Children & Domestic Violence Committee held a planning day in September 2014 to address the response to children experiencing domestic violence. An action item from that planning day was to have Dr. Kelly present to the Council on the trauma of removal. In the past, children exposed to domestic violence have been thought to be best protected by removing them from their environment but recent studies show that keeping the child with a secure caregiver is less traumatic for the child. Caregivers mitigate the violent effects when they engage, meet needs and provide a secure basis for the child while having a strong attachment to the child. The response needs to consider the effect of separation as well as the safety of the child prior to removal. Research has shown that children suffering a traumatic event between the ages of 0-3 years old can be affected in their later years, and removal of older children can create a preoccupation with the safety of their mother. Delaware is exploring adoption of David Mandel's Safe & Together Model which addresses holding perpetrators accountable for their parenting choices while keeping children with the protective parent. Secretary Ranji, DFS and stakeholders will meet with David Mandel on September 18, 2015.

Nomination of Chair & Vice Chair: Secretary Ranji nominated Senator Blevins for Chair and Dana Harrington Conner for Vice Chair. Voting will occur during the December Quarterly meeting. There was a reminder that the statute will be amended this year to make the term of Chair and Vice Chair two years instead of one year.

Annual Report Update: The proof of the 2015 Annual Report was circulated. Ellie Torres highlighted a few of the format changes which include expansion of the Committee sections and the addition of statistics/resources from partner agencies for a more inclusive view of domestic violence initiatives and resources in Delaware. The DVCC statute will be amended to reflect an

annual reporting date in October to allow the partner agencies more time to submit fiscal year statistics.

Ellie also mentioned the domestic violence deaths in 2014 and 2015 were included in this year's FIRT report. It was noted that the FIRT report will no longer be combined in the Annual Report. Instead the FIRT report will be presented to the Council during the May Quarterly meetings.

VAWA Vote and DV Fund Report: Delaware's FY2013 STOP VAWA Formula Grant has an unobligated balance of funds in the Law Enforcement and the Court categories. The VAWA Implementation Committee recommends the following:

- Law Enforcement (\$48,000)
 - DOC Probation & Parole: This would be to continue the NCC Victims Service Assistant for the 12th year.
- Court (\$45,000)
 - These are reverted back funds from Family Court when they discontinued a contract DV Coordinator position.
 - DVCC: Evaluation project of the Certified Batterer Treatment Programs

The CJC received an extension on this award. The federal end date is 6/30/16.

Reminder: FY2013 is the last year the 5% Court funding may go to projects that benefit the courts. Due to changes with the Reauthorization of VAWA ("VAWA2013"), all future STOP grant will have the 5% that must go "TO" the courts.

A motion was made by Secretary Ranji to fund the FFY13 recommendations made by the VAWA Implementation Committee with the unobligated balances. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

In December 2014, the DVCC and CJC approved funding for NPO Victim Services, Prosecution and Law Enforcement. A balance remained in the Law Enforcement and Court categories. Funding also remained unobligated to ensure federal compliance with the newly required Sexual Assault Set Aside in the NPO Victim Services category.

The VAWA Implementation Committee would like to recommend the following:

- 1 new program for sexual assault services in the NPO Victims Services
- 3 law enforcement projects for continuation funding
- 5 new projects under the funding that must go to the Courts

An unobligated balance of \$105,136 remains.

A motion was made by Secretary Ranji to fund the FY14 recommendations made by the VAWA Implementation Committee with the unobligated balance. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

In the fall 2014, a competitive solicitation was released for the \$100,667 available to non-profit domestic violence organizations for direct services to victims. The CJC received four applications, totaling \$136,494.

In December 2014, the DVCC voted to approve funding for two of the projects leaving a balance of \$29,623. The VAWA Implementation Committee invited CHILD, Inc. to resubmit their proposal to address issues that were raised during the initial review. The Committee is recommending CHILD, Inc. for funding for a 2 year project that would support male victims of domestic violence with emergency shelter and support.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coupe to fund a 2 year project to provide shelter and support to male victims of domestic violence. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Total deposits made to the Domestic Violence Fund for the July 1, 2014 – June 30, 25 period: \$96,492.50. The CJC receives 5% (\$4,824) for administration of the DV fund. Total amount available for the 2015 DV Fund Solicitation: \$91,688.50.

The VAWA Implementation Committee will be drafting the annual competitive solicitation for a fall release. The Committee would like to recommend this year's funding be specific for legal services for victims of domestic violence.

A motion was made by Secretary Ranji to have the 2015 DV Fund solicitation be specific for legal services for victims of domestic violence. Motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Creation of a High Risk Team in Delaware: Joe Miller and Deianna Jason presented for the team that traveled to Boston in 2013 to learn about domestic violence high risk teams. After returning from Boston, the team felt the focus should first be on the lethality assessment program (LAP). Now that the LAP has been implemented, there is an interest in revisiting the possibility of having a high risk team in Delaware. Detective Miller indicated that Wilmington Police Department does have an “unofficial” process for identifying, monitoring and intervening high risk domestic violence cases but there is nothing in place to ensure that continues or expand it to other parts of the State. Handouts presented showed that Boston and Framingham have had success with such teams resulting in a reduction of victim re-assaults, reduction of victims needing shelter, increase in pre-trial detainment, increase prosecution, increase in victims accessing services and more robust police reports. A very important aspect is that no domestic violence deaths have occurred since the development of these High Risk Teams. To have a team in Delaware, we must have prosecutors, victim service providers, police, child welfare organization and probation officer participation. The Council approved the creation of an ad hoc committee within the Criminal Justice Committee to further discuss the creation of Delaware High Risk Team.

DVCC Committee Updates:

Treatment Committee: At the September 9, 2015 meeting, there was a discussion about adding language in domestic violence sentencing orders where defendants would be evaluated by a certified treatment provider to determine if a batterers' intervention program or anger management was appropriate. Judge Rocanelli recommends that police reports include the lethality assessment (LAP) and properly disclose a domestic violence case in order for the case to be assigned to the proper court calendar. She also stated that there is a disconnect between the Department of Justice's Criminal and Family Divisions. For example, plea deals stipulate anger management programs since the criminal prosecutor is not familiar with domestic violence protocol. With the appointment of new judges, Judge Rocanelli recommends a lethality assessment presentation for the Judges' conference in the spring. Commissioner Coupe will take this information back to the Treatment Committee for further discussion.

Criminal Justice Committee: The Police Chiefs' Council sent a letter referring back to the Criminal Justice Committee questions regarding the development of a model policy for police officers involved with serving default PFA orders.

Fatal Incident Review Team: Ellie Torres, Natasha Smith and Melanie Ewing-Lahutsky attended a three day fatality review conference in May 2015. At the conference there was information presented on the benefit of incorporating perpetrator and victim survivor interviews to the review process. Since the conference, Melanie and Natasha conducted four family interviews (two perpetrators and two victims) prior to the June FIRT review. The entire format of the review was changed from a DVCC staff-driven review to an inclusive team review resulting in a more open dialect and a more inclusive picture of the events. Open dialog allowed for the Team to identify "red" flags, hear from investigating detective, review crime scene information and develop additional questions for family members.

The next steps for FIRT are to modify the statute to expand membership to include a domestic violence survivor, a shelter advocate and a treatment provider; to consider the definition for near-death reviews; and to modify the policies and procedures of FIRT. These changes will allow the Team to make more effective recommendations.

Announcements:

- Proclamation Signing for Domestic Violence Awareness Month will be 10/2 at 10:30 a.m. at the YWCA on Madison Street in Wilmington
- Sussex DV Prevention Forum will be 10/17 at 1:30 p.m. at the Georgetown Presbyterian Church will be in Spanish and the event is open to the public.
- Adrienne Owen announced the Law Enforcement Conference will be held 11/9 at Polytech Adult Education. Based on prior feedback, the first half of the day will have national speakers focusing on strangulation. The second half of the day will be panel discussions related to domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Panel will include Judges, Probation & Parole and Victim Advocates.
- Family Visitation Centers 20th Anniversary Open Houses will be 10/23 at 9:30 -11:30 a.m. at the Milford State Service Center and at the Hudson State Service Center on 10/26 at 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Public Comment: Tim Collins, member of the public, made statements to the Council regarding his concerns that men are also victims of domestic violence.

Next Meeting Date: December 14, 2015 at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.